

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS:

The attached sheets of drawings include amendments to FIGS. 10 and 12. These sheets replace the original sheets 8 and 10, which included FIGS. 10 and 12. A complete set of corrected formal drawings accompanies this Amendment.

HAYES SOLOWAY P.C.
3450 E. SUNRISE DRIVE,
SUITE 140
TUCSON, AZ 85718
TEL. 520.882.7623
FAX. 520.882.7643

175 CANAL STREET
MANCHESTER, NH 03101
TEL. 603.668.1400
FAX. 603.668.8567

REMARKS

Claims 60, 69, 71, 72, 75 and 81 have been amended to correct various informalities, to overcome the § 112 rejection and the objection to the drawings.

The Examiner's indication that claims 66-67 and 73 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims is noted with thanks. In response, claim 73 has been cancelled and rewritten in independent form as claim 88. No new matter is included by the foregoing amendments.

The specification and drawings, in addition to the claims, have been amended to overcome the Examiner's objection to the drawings for failing to show the features referenced in claims 64, 69, 72, and 80. In regards to claim 64, corresponding changes have been made to the specification and to FIG. 2, labeling annular channel 42, which is equivalent to the circumferential channel of claim 64. Turning to claim 69, the claim has been amended to reflect that the first flange is adapted to be secured to the chamber wall by an adhesive, a feature that is readily shown in FIGS. 11-16. Turning to claim 72, the claim has been amended to require that the second flange is connected to the second portion by a threaded connection, shown by numeral 248 in FIG. 12, i.e., as described at page 21, lines 21-22 of the specification. Finally, the specification has been amended to specify that numeral 707 of FIG. 17 is a "cocoon of resin" surrounded by cover 660, which is one way of describing encapsulating the at least one flange in an adhesive.

Turning to the Examiner's § 112 rejections, claim 60 has been amended to clarify the language specified by the Examiner. In regards to claim 80, it is intended that the cover is adapted *both* to cover and least one of said flange(s) *and* to encapsulate the at least one of said flange(s) in an adhesive. Thus, amendment of claim 80 is believed to be necessary.

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Turning to the art rejections and considering first the rejection of claims 60 and 83 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by EP1038140, claim 83 is dependent upon claim 60 which, as amended, requires a pair of flanges formed of a non-plastic material and adapted to bond to glass reinforced plastic (GRP). EP1038140 fails to teach at least this feature. EP1038140, in stark contrast to the claim at hand, teaches the electrofusion of a flange made from a plastic fusible material, such as polyethylene. The flange of EP1038140 is not and cannot be adapted to bond to GRP. The present application outlines the importance of this feature. “Plastics materials such as polyethylene or polyamides are not generally good at bonding to GRP using conventional resins or adhesives, hence the need for a two-part fitting.” Specification, page 13, lines 10-12. Thus, in EP1038140 because the flange is made from an electrofusible plastic material and is therefore not satisfactory for bonding to GRP, EP1038140 cannot be said to achieve or render obvious claim 60 or any claim that depends thereon, including claim 83.

Turning to the Examiner’s rejection of claims 60-62, 68, 70, 71, 75, 78-80 and 84-86 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 3,749,424 to Greene (hereinafter “Greene”), each of the rejected claims ultimately depends on independent claim 60. Greene suffers from at least the same deficiencies with respect to claim 60 as EP1038140, as discussed *supra*. The Examiner admits that Greene teaches that all of the components, except part 14, are constructed of plastic. Greene does not teach the importance of choice of material for the fitting surfaces forming a bond with the wall because Greene is primarily concerned with sheet metal as a chamber wall. Further, Greene does not teach, either implicitly or explicitly, that the washer of Greene should be adapted in any way to bond to GRP. Thus, it

HAYES SOLOWAY P.C.
3450 E. SUNRISE DRIVE,
SUITE 140
TUCSON, AZ 85718
TEL. 520.882.7623
FAX. 520.882.7643

175 CANAL STREET
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TEL. 603.668.1400
FAX. 603.668.8567

cannot be said that Greene achieves or renders obvious claim 60 or any other claims that depend thereon.

Turning finally to the rejection of claims 60-64, 70 and 74 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,883,836 to Breay et al. (hereinafter “Breay”), as with the rejections discussed above, each of the claims rejected ultimately depends on claim 60, which requires a pair of flanges formed of a non-plastic material and adapted to bond to glass reinforced plastic (GRP) and further requires “a tubular sleeve formed from an electrofusible plastics material.” Breay does not teach either of these features. The fitting of Breay does not form a bond between flanges 29 and surface 13, but instead accompanies the flanges with a silicon “fill-it seal” 26. Nor does Breay enter into a discussion of the relevant materials. Further, the Examiner incorrectly equates the transfer tube of Breay with the tubular sleeve of claim 60. Unlike the tubular sleeve, the transfer tube of Breay fails to come in contact with the pipe assembly and is therefore unable to couple the fitting to the pipe assembly. Instead, the pipe assembly is coupled to the fitting by retainer 90 and o-ring 98. Thus, for at least the reasons discussed herein, Breay cannot be said to render obvious claim 60 or any of claims 61-64, 70 and 74 that ultimately depend thereon.

Having dealt with all the objections raised by the Examiner, the Application is believed to be in order for allowance. Early and favorable action is respectfully requested.

Applicant requests that the non-elected claims be maintained in this application, without further action, for possible rejoinder and/or for filing of a divisional application.

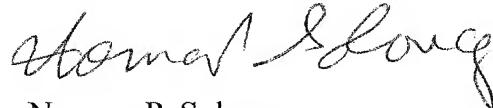
Fees under 37 CFR 1.16(h) for one added independent claim (\$220.00) are being paid via EFS-web.

HAYES SOLOWAY P.C.
3450 E. SUNRISE DRIVE,
SUITE 140
TUCSON, AZ 85718
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FAX. 520.882.7643

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MANCHESTER, NH 03101
TEL. 603.668.1400
FAX. 603.668.8567

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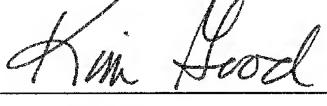
Respectfully submitted,



Norman P. Soloway
Attorney for Applicants
Reg. No. 24,315

CERTIFICATE OF ELECTRONIC FILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Patent Office via the electronic filing procedure on August 27, 2009.

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HAYES SOLOWAY P.C.
3450 E. SUNRISE DRIVE,
SUITE 140
TUCSON, AZ 85718
TEL. 520.882.7623
FAX. 520.882.7643

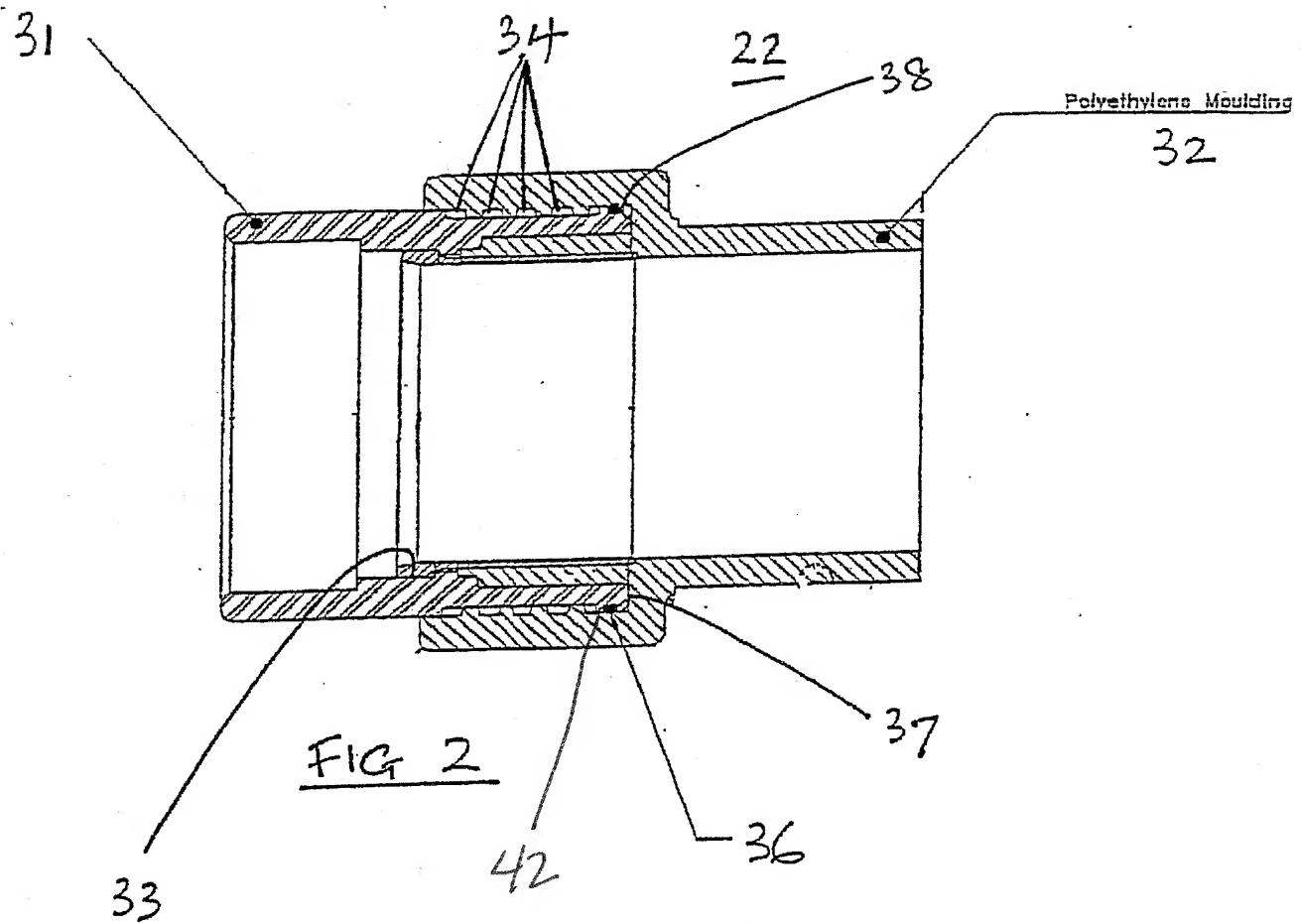
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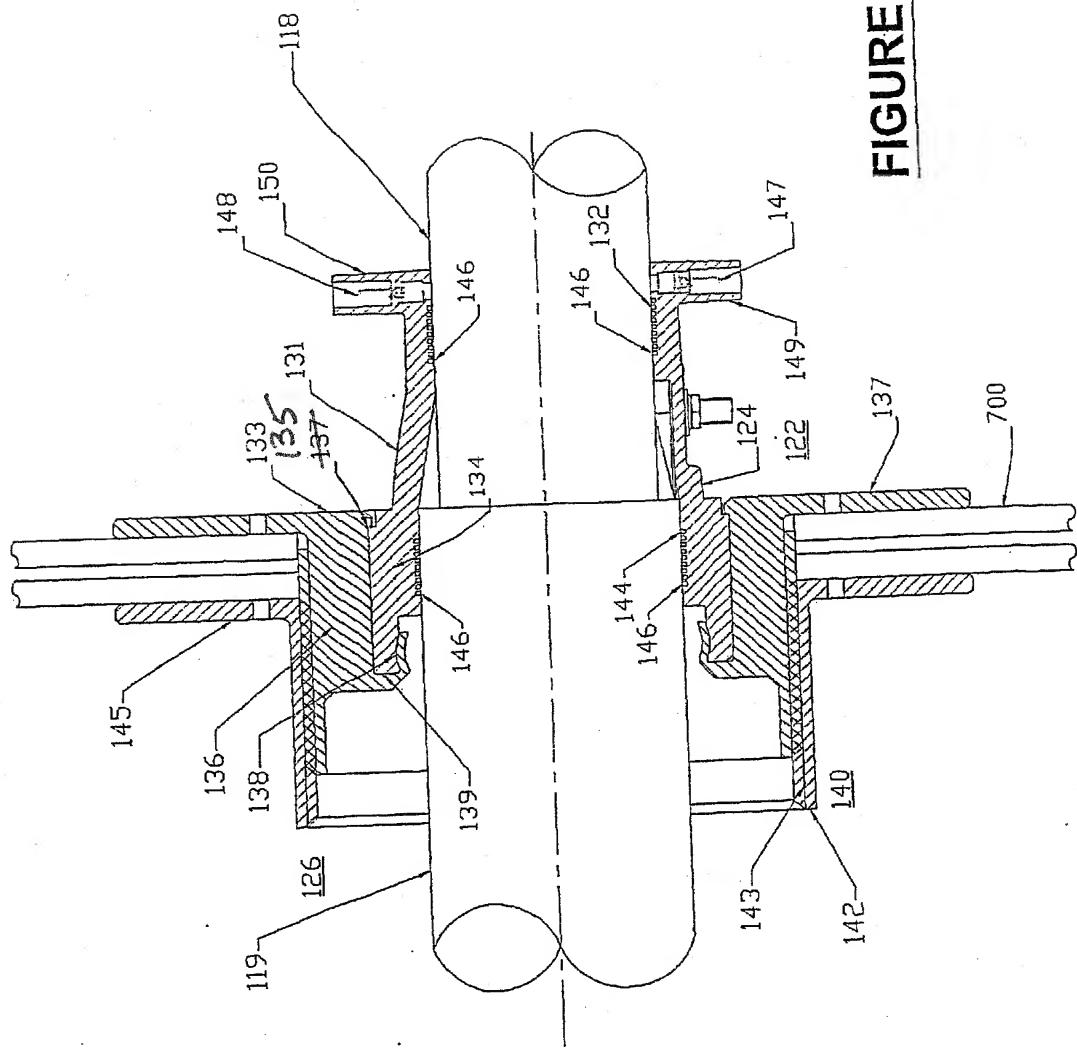
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ANNOTATED MARKED-UP DRAWINGS

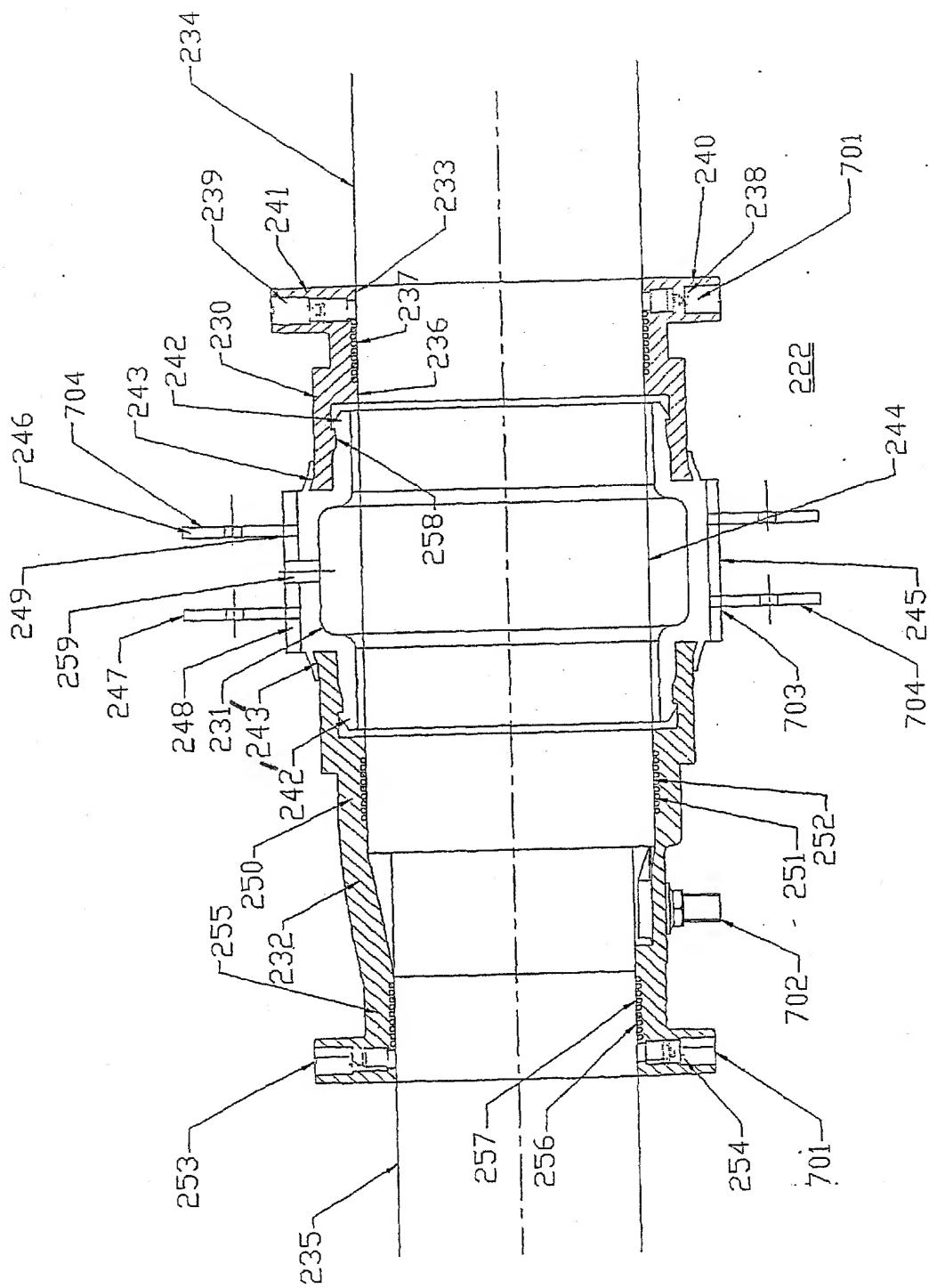
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FIGURE 10

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FIGURE 12

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REPLACEMENT DRAWINGS